

MAIL TODAY

Mawana Sugars marathon test event for CWG

By **Mail Today Correspondent**
In New Delhi

AS DELHIITES take part in the Mawana Sugars Indian Open marathon on Sunday, they will be participating in what will perhaps be the last marathon organised by the Athletics Federation of India (AFI) before the Commonwealth Games in October. The marathon is also being treated as a test event for the Games, as the route followed will be the same.

"The route that will be followed is a 10.49-kilometre stretch from the starting point, Princess Place, India Gate. The half-marathon runners will cover the route twice, while the full marathoners will run four laps," said Rajesh Tara, secretary, Mawana Sugars Indian Open marathon.

Tara said that he had discussed the logistics with the Delhi police and was positive everything will go peacefully. "It's also a test exercise for the police ahead of the Commonwealth Games marathon event," he said.

The Delhi police has decided to leave a special lane on the left side of the road for the marathoners and not allow any pedestrians or traffic to cross of roads in the four hours when the event will be on. Vehicles will keep moving through the rest of the road to avoid any traffic snarls.

Nobody from India has managed to qualify for the Commonwealth Games marathon event and this could be a good chance for them to do so. Leading the pack will be Shiv Dhan Singh in the men's marathon, while Shastri Devi, who recently won the Mumbai marathon, will be the favourite among women.

Sunita Godara, former national level athlete who will be running the half-marathon in the veteran's category, held a workshop in the Capital on Saturday and gave tips to runners ahead of the marathon. "I think marathon timings among Indian men are alright but women need to push a lot more," she said.

The winners of Sunday's full marathon will get Rs 2,50,000 each in the men's and women's categories. The veterans will be awarded Rs 25,000.